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Dear Colleague,

Election Day 2018 produced the largest Democratic gain in the House of Representatives since Watergate. The American people have given us a mandate to pursue an aggressive legislative agenda that holds this Administration accountable while remaining united behind core Democratic values. There is no better person to take on this historic and challenging task than Leader Nancy Pelosi.

As a strategist, a policymaker, and an effective negotiator, Leader Pelosi has worked skillfully and steadfastly to accomplish our Democratic legislative goals, even while in the minority. She protected Social Security, built a coalition to pass the Affordable Care Act, and led us to a major victory in the most recent midterm election. She has time and again demonstrated the skills required to steer our Democratic Caucus as Speaker once again.

The 116th Congress will include the most openly LGBTQ Members in the history of our country. As a Co-Chair of the Equality Caucus, I know that Leader Pelosi will continue to be a staunch supporter of the LGBTQ community as Speaker. Her record speaks for itself. As a new Member of Congress in 1987, Leader Pelosi's first speech on the House floor addressed the critical need to face the AIDS epidemic head on. She has always been a dedicated supporter of marriage equality and openly opposed the so-called "Defense of Marriage Act." Furthermore, under her leadership, the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and comprehensive hate crimes legislation were signed into law. For more than three decades, Leader Pelosi has made the LGBTQ community a priority in her legislative agenda.

Leader Pelosi is also a fierce advocate for our nation's veterans. As Vice Ranking Member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I have seen firsthand her passion for protecting veterans' healthcare and education benefits. As Leader, she frequently engages with Veteran Service Organizations to ensure that their priorities are not only heard, but also implemented. She championed expanding the GI Bill, first with the Post 9/11 GI Bill in 2008, then with the GI Bill 2.0 in 2010, and most recently with the Forever GI Bill, which lifted the cap on what are now lifetime benefits for veterans and their families.

Nancy Pelosi has already earned her place as one of the most effective Speakers in the history of the United States. Because we need her skilled leadership now more than ever, I proudly support her to be the next Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Sincerely,



Mark Takano
Member of Congress